



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE ROUND TABLE

"TURN THEM LOOSE"

I am wondering if some of my brother schoolmasters in the English department have not been harassed occasionally by a problem similar to mine. And since the *English Journal* has always been so charitable in allowing us to air our opinions, I venture to proclaim the familiar "Eureka."

Here is the problem which formerly annoyed me. I frequently go out through the state lecturing. While packing my suit-case on the eve of departure, conscience—a pedagogue's most intimate companion—would question me thus: "Hast thou provided for thy classes during thine absence?" The query would worry me; I simply could not leave the university gates until I had hunted up some trusty Senior to conduct written quizzes or searched out some *unbusy* instructor—that, of course, precludes an English teacher—to hear my students recite. I have tried this arrangement, but it seems to have met with only meager success.

Recently I went scheming for another plan. I thought it proper to try the experiment on my forty-odd Freshmen in English I. I therefore announced to them one morning: "Now, my good lads and lasses, I shall have to forego the pleasure of meeting you in class for the next ten days (*applause*). And furthermore I have not engaged anyone to conduct quizzes or recitations (*louder applause*). I have decided to turn you loose—loose among the fiction shelves of our library. You tell me you positively don't have time for reading, and remembering my own college days I am inclined to believe your statement. Now is your chance. While I am away I want you to read some interesting book that you have been wanting to read, but have not had time for. Now, don't choose a particular book because you think it will please *me*; be honest, and select one that will fit your own individual tastes. Another thing: don't read the book as an irksome task, but for the real, aesthetic delight and rapturous enjoyment you can get from it. I am quite willing for you to lay aside temporarily your Woolley and Canby, provided that this third period of each day you spend in the companionship of your chosen book. Of course, you need not come to these hard benches, but may remain in your favorite rocking-chair. And at the next meeting

of the class I wish each to submit a literary criticism of several pages, telling me frankly about your impressions of the book. As I am trying this as an experiment, I trust you will not disappoint me."

What was the result? I do not hesitate to call it an unqualified success. I am convinced that both instructor and students benefited from this arrangement. There can be no doubt about the wholesome exhilaration which a change from desk to platform gave to me. Going out into the rural villages as I did, I had opportunity to touch real earth again, to rid myself of the musty odor of textbooks, to visit with parents, and to observe here and there conditions which make the teaching of English composition in universities imperative. How charitable I have been since my return! It has made me more sympathetic in my teaching, and more human in my efforts to help boys and girls use better English. Someone has said that college professors can be divided into two classes: those who know their subjects, and those who love their students. For those who wish to qualify in this latter group, I suggest lecture engagements in small towns.

And apparently the Freshmen relished the temporary shift from textbook to fiction. When I entered the classroom, they applauded heartily—perhaps, because I stayed away so long. But piled up on my desk were unusually fat themes, an eloquent testimony of their delight at the literature shelves. A few minutes' conversation convinced me that each had been well employed. We returned to our textbook with an enthusiasm for work, and, what is more important, with an enthusiasm for each other.

I have just now finished reading those themes. They were altogether the most interesting articles that my blue pencil has touched this semester. After grading endless themes each week on an assigned subject, it was a relief to turn to these unrestrained impressions of popular books. I say *popular*, because the selection from purely classical literature was noticeably small. But what of it? Should we expect Freshmen in a university, young people from small, prairie towns, to choose the same book that our Ph.D. professor claims to appreciate? I urged my students to select what literature they honestly thought they would enjoy; and evidently they followed instructions. The essays of Macaulay, the plays of Dryden, and the art criticisms of Ruskin no one was dishonest enough to choose. But since they avoided the trashy, unwholesome stuff that sometimes masquerades under the name of literature, I feel confident that they will acquire a reading habit which will prove capable of development.

I give here a partial list of the books chosen, and am not ashamed to consider the list commendable: *Life on the Mississippi*, Mark Twain; *The Sky Pilot*, Ralph Connor; *Black Rock*, Ralph Connor; *The Man from Glengarry*, Ralph Connor; *The Prospector*, Ralph Connor; *Adam Bede*, George Eliot; *The Virginians*, Thackeray; *The Light That Failed*, Kipling; *The Eyes of the World*, Harold Bell Wright; *The Shepherd of the Hills*, Harold Bell Wright; *The Calling of Dan Matthews*, Harold Bell Wright; *The Crossing*, Winston Churchill; *The Hoosier School Master*, Edward Eggleston; *Romeo and Juliet*, William Shakespeare; *The Virginian*, Owen Wister; *My Autobiography*, Benjamin Franklin; *The Rosary*, Florence L. Barclay; *Ivanhoe*, Walter Scott.

This experiment has set me thinking. Can we not take a hint from the English system of education, and, in place of uninterrupted classroom drill, occasionally grant some opportunity for browsing *ad libetum* among the bookshelves? Of course, this could be overdone; I emphasize the provision *occasionally*. At any rate, I feel impelled to whisper to my clansmen in the teaching of rhetoric: "Once in a while journey outside the college gates, and give unto the parents of your students some popular lectures on literature. And as for the students during your absence, why, turn them loose in a good library."

JOHN ADAMS TAYLOR

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

PICTURES FOR THE USE OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

So many requests have come for more definite information about pictures available for use in the teaching of literature that the editor of the *English Journal* has given space to a list of publishers of prints and other lists for individual books. If teachers will let me know in what books they are most interested, or for which ones they most need pictures, perhaps this journal will grant space for several lists.

Many of the standard books containing good illustrations can be found in any city library. The *United States Catalog*, containing titles, prices, and publishers, and informations about illustrations, may be consulted in libraries or in the shops of booksellers, for editions of the classics. In ordering books, the specific edition or name of the illustrator must be given.

On account of the war it is not easy now to obtain foreign post-cards. However, local dealers will probably be willing to order. The delay is considerable, and some of the subjects cannot be had, as production has ceased in some places.